

to his courtiers, and those who had known him only as a monarch. Eight or ten days after the birth of the King of Rome, as I was one morning walking in the Champs Elysees, I met Murat. He was alone, and dressed in a long blue overcoat. We were exactly opposite the gardens of his sister-in-law, the Princess Borghese. "Well, Bourrienne," said Murat, after we had exchanged the usual courtesies, "well, what are you about now?" I informed him how I had been treated by Napoleon, who, that I might not be in Hamburg when the decree of union arrived there, had recalled me to Paris under a show of confidence. I think I still see the handsome and expressive countenance of Joachim when, having addressed him by the titles of Sire and Your Majesty, he said to me, "Pshaw! Bourrienne, are we not old comrades? The Emperor has treated you unjustly; and to whom has he not been unjust? His displeasure is preferable to his favor, which costs so dear! He says that he made us Kings; but did we not make him an Emperor? To you, my friend, whom I have known long and intimately, I can make my profession of faith. My sword, my blood, my life belong to the Emperor. When he calls me to the field to combat his enemies and the enemies of France I am no longer a King, I resume the rank of a Marshal of the Empire; but let him require no more. At Naples I will be King of Naples, and I will not sacrifice to his false calculations the life, the well-being, and the interests of my subjects.¹ Let him not imagine that he can treat me as he has treated Louis! For I am ready to defend, even against him, if it must be so, the rights of the people over whom he has appointed me to rule. Am I then

¹ If we add to the irksomeness of a foreign rule the severity of the irregular courts-martial and military tribunals and the detested conscription law, which sent the young men of sunny Naples to perish by thousands in Northern Germany or the wilds of Poland and Russia, it will be understood how unpopular must have been Napoleon, who ordered all these things. M. de Bourrienne, however, does not over-estimate the effects of the Continental system; it had reduced one-half of the Kingdom to beggary. In the rich oil country about Gallipoli, Taranto, and Bari, through a large portion of Apulia and Calabria, many people no longer pressed the olives that their rich groves furnished, as, owing to the exclusion of England, America, etc., from the market, the price of the oil scarcely paid the expenses of its preparation. Murat, however, was always personally popular with a large portion of the Neapolitan nation. — *Editor of 1836 edition.*